

2018 Amherst Election Guide



The League of Women Voters wishes to thank the Amherst Town Clerk, Sandra J. Burgess, and the staff in the Town Clerk's office for providing the information and assistance which made this guide possible.

Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy of the information in this guide. We sincerely regret any errors.

HOW TO VOTE IN THE UPCOMING ELECTION



WRITE-IN CANDIDATES:

Anyone wishing to conduct a write-in campaign should check with the Town Clerk's office in Town Hall about the procedures involved. It is the candidate's responsibility to make voters aware of his or her wish to receive write-in votes.

A voter may write in the name of a person not listed on the ballot in the appropriate write-in space and fill in the corresponding oval. A mistake in the spelling of the name or the address does not invalidate the vote if the intent of the voter can be determined.

ABSENTEE VOTING:

Any recognized voter who will be unable to go to the polls on election day, either because he or she is out of town or is physically disabled, or for religious belief, may apply for an absentee ballot at the Town Clerk's office, before noon of the day before the election. An application may be made with the official form or any written form of communication which states the precise address to which you wish the ballot to be sent. There must be a handwritten signature. Anyone needing an absentee ballot should call the Town Clerk's office for information at 259-3035

POLLING PLACES:

The polls are open from 7am to 8pm, Tuesday, March 27, 2018

Precinct 1:	North Zion Korean Church North Pleasant St at Pine St	Precinct 6:	Fort River School 70 South East St
Precinct 2:	North Fire Station East Pleasant St at Eastman Lane	Precinct 7:	Crocker Farm School 280 West St
Precinct 3:	Immanuel Lutheran Church 867 North Pleasant St (just north of UMass)	Precinct 8:	Munson Memorial Library South Amherst Common
Precinct 4 & 5:	Bangs Community Center Boltwood Walk	Precinct 9:	Wildwood School 71 Strong St
		Precinct 10:	Bangs Community Center Boltwood Walk

Let's expedite development processes, let's tastefully build new storefronts and residential housing, make more tax revenue, hire more teachers, police, EMTs and build new schools. Silencing Town Meeting is not who we are as a community & I oppose this new charter.

ROBERT GREENEY
76 McClellan
Physics professor
Resident: 24 years

Broad, diverse, and meaningful participation by Amherst residents in Amherst government needs to be preserved and enhanced. The tendency to accumulate and concentrate power in the hands of the few is a threat to the well-being of our town and our nation. The Select Board, through its meeting agenda, committee appointments, and executive leadership role must empower and encourage broad, diverse and meaningful citizen participation. Creative coordination of competing interests will amplify our collective ability to build quality.

***DOUGLAS WESLEY SLAUGHTER**
5 Dwight Circle
Amherst Pelham schools database analyst
Resident: 21 years

The outcome of the Charter question is the most critical issue facing the Town. I believe my experience on the Select Board, as well as my service on the Finance Committee and in Town Meeting, essential to keeping the Town moving forward, whether transitioning to a new form of government or working with advocates on both sides of the Charter question to refresh and enhance Town Meeting and the community's engagement with it.

TOWN MEETING

Questionnaires were mailed to all candidates for Town Meeting. Each candidate was asked to reply to the question below (40 word limit). Candidates who did not respond are listed by name and address only. For each candidate who responded to the questionnaire, occupation and number of years of residency have been indicated.

QUESTION: WHAT IS THE SINGLE MOST CRITICAL ISSUE FACING AMHERST THAT MOTIVATED YOU TO RUN?

upgrades--not costly replacements; essential human service agencies; local public transportation gaps; town roads/sidewalks.

***SHARON POVINELLI**
493 Montague Road
Merchant
Resident: 25 years

Smart growth management is crucial to the services our community values. Amherst is a college town. Education--directly or indirectly--is our business. Our ability, or lack thereof, to form consistent consensus addressing this relationship as reflected in our schools, our neighborhoods and our commerce centers remains our biggest challenge.

***KERRY SPITZER**
56 Berkshire Ter
Health services researcher
Resident: 18 years

I believe our public schools are one of our town's greatest assets, and we need to continue to invest in both the infrastructure and the people so that Amherst public schools are the schools of choice for our families.

***KENTON F THARP**
375 Montague Road
Maintenance
Resident: 38 years

Maintain democracy for Amherst and the U.S.A. being threatened by money in elections and a move towards autocracy.

***MERRYLEES TURNER**
19 Old Town Road
Retired
Resident: 35 years

The big issue is our local form of government. I want to keep our democratic town meeting that preserves our neighborhoods and townscape. It is a check on overdevelopment and sprawl. 240 members represent our multiverse community and deliberates legislation on a level playground.

***LAWRENCE P. QUIGLEY III**
35 Ball Lane
Trucker
Resident: 39 years

I believe ardently in government by the people. I volunteer to participate in the making and implementing of policy decisions. I choose to trust the collective wisdom of my community; our home town. I am willing to show up and "...Reason Together..."

1 YEAR - VOTE FOR 1

PATRICIA LANE
72A Montague Road
Homemaker
Resident: 3 years

I think Amherst's single most critical issue is growth--How large should this town become? Where should we put everyone? What should the physical structures look like? Are various groups, such as students, such as the homeless, being treated equitably? Is this town going to remain affordable for middle income families?

KIMBERLY MAY MEAD

TOWN MEETING MODERATOR

1 YEAR - VOTE FOR 1

***JAMES PISTRANG**
41 High Point Drive
Software developer
Resident: 29 years

New England Town Meeting is grass-roots democracy at its best, encouraging the participation and engagement of a large number of citizens. Town Meeting must adhere to rules, standards and traditions in order to operate effectively. I hope to continue using my skills and expertise to guide Town Meeting in a clear, nonpartisan, and effective manner.

TOWN MEETING PRECINCT 1

3 YEARS - VOTE FOR 8

***HILDA GREENBAUM**
298 Montague Road,
Resident: 58 years

Most critical now is the preservation of our broad-based, inclusive, grass roots democracy, to prevent transitioning to an oligarchy unlikely to listen to citizen initiatives or incorporate citizen perspectives in its decisions, as evidence from Charter Commission meetings. I love puzzling issues for what decision is best for us all.

***PATRICIA HOLLAND**

***JANET KELLER**
120 Pulpit Hill Road unit 25
Community and statewide planner
Resident: 9 years

The most critical issue I see is the need for us to tackle pressing issues together. I want to continue to work for consensus solutions to rebuild infrastructure, redirect development of market and affordable housing to enhance our historic downtown, neighborhoods and environment, and hold the line on taxes.

***MARY JANE LAUS**
36 Sumner Street
Nutritionist-Retired
Resident: 50 years

Amherst continues to face hard financial decisions; also the town must choose its form of governance. Experience through various committees and organizations benefitting youth and adults in our community including (ASC, CDBG, LWV, Amherst Media), has provided some insight. I seek your continued support as a town meeting representative.

***VINCENT J. O'CONNOR**
175 Sumner Street Apt. 12
Community organizer
Resident: 43 years

Preserving genuine municipal self-governance--Amherst's Town Meeting--and persuading it to fund: Fort River/Wildwood school renovation/replacements; a South Amherst Fire Station; substantial Jones Library, Central Fire Station and Public Works Headquarters building

LIBRARY TRUSTEE

3 YEARS - VOTE FOR 2

KITTY AXELSON-BERRY
89 Stony Hill Rd
Publisher
Resident: 12 years

Neglect our libraries and hope it just all works out? No! Plans to demolish, replace, over-expand and disrespect the Jones' distinguished history have been sidelined indefinitely. It's time to reclaim what Amherst residents want and deserve: a sustainably renovated, affordable, well-maintained, technologically up-to-date library system. As a long-term patron, mother and grandmother of four avid users, I will advocate for fiscal prudence, sustainability, safety, access and the well-being of valued employees. Unceasingly!

***TAMSON ELY**
26 Middle St
Community college library director -retired
Resident: 35 years

Our town's biggest challenge is meeting the needs of all of our community. The Jones Library must add meeting rooms and bolster programs, collections, and digital resources for ESL residents, children, teens, seniors, and Amherst history researchers. The Jones and branches are inadequate to meet these critical needs. My community college library experience brings a unique perspective to the board concerning services and space needs for diverse library users, and it motivates me to continue working for stronger Amherst libraries.

SIGURD NILSEN
27 Teaberry Lane
Economist-retired
Resident: 9 years

I'm running for Library Trustee out of concern for the future of our historic Jones Library. First, I want to bring sound financial management to the crucial decisions facing the Jones Library. Second, to bring good stewardship principles to the overall maintenance of the Jones Library building and two branch libraries. Third, to improve the valuable services all three libraries provide to our community. Finally, I would include the two branch libraries in all future library planning.

***AUSTIN SARAT**
76 Snell St
College professor
Resident: 43 years

As Amherst considers improving its form of government, we should insure that our libraries also improve. This is why I support renovating and expanding the Jones. Our libraries should remain places where people of varied backgrounds and ages come together and have equal access to books, technology, and programming. If re-elected as a Trustee, I will support the branches and our library staff, steward the endowment, pursue appropriate fundraising strategies, and partner with Amherst's cultural and educational communities.

REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

5 YEARS - VOTE FOR 1

JEFFREY LEE
815 South East St
Software developer
Resident: 14 years

Amherst residents have varied, sometimes opposing, visions for the town's future. Lack of public consensus around development project planning has impeded the implementation of solutions and eroded trust in the process. I hope to contribute a spirit of openness, inquisitiveness and collaboration to the Redevelopment Authority as we seek winning redevelopment strategies and initiatives.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

3 YEARS - VOTE FOR 2

BENJAMIN J HERRINGTON
99J Southpoint Drive
Custodian
Resident: 12 years

I am seeking your vote for School Committee in order to serve as a communicative bridge between people who may feel unheard, or left out of conversations, and the school system. I will add diversity to the school committee, in terms of my skill set and unique perspective, while working to advance our academic process and facilities into a sustainable model of excellence going forward.

ALLISON BLEYLER MCDONALD
43 Hop Brook Rd
Non-profit marketing and communications
Resident: 15 years

I am passionate about our public schools and the role they play in shaping our students' learning futures and in building a thriving community. We face multiple challenges with our schools, including providing high-quality learning environments and ensuring learning success for all students. Our schools are a cornerstone in our community and we all have a stake in the solutions. I want to help the School Committee address these challenges, using my skills at listening, creative solution-finding, and pragmatic decision-making.

KERRY SPITZER
56 Berkshire Ter
Health services researcher
Resident: 18 years

I am running because I believe our public schools are one of our town's greatest assets, and we need to continue to invest in both the infrastructure and the people so that Amherst public schools are the schools of choice for our families. I would prioritize addressing Wildwood and Fort River building issues and pursue policies, such as bilingual education in K-6 in order to achieve this goal.

SELECT BOARD

3 YEARS - VOTE FOR 1

IVAN B BABIAN
187 Colonial Village
Politics
Resident: 12 years

I love our lively business district, conservation areas, and our public safety complex. Increasing emergency staff & having fastest response time is in all our best interests. A new fire station was proposed 12 years ago.

TOWN-WIDE OFFICE

Questionnaires were mailed to all candidates seeking office. Each candidate was asked to reply to the question below (90 word limit). Candidates who did not respond are listed by name and address only. For each candidate who responded to the questionnaire, occupation and number of years of residency have been indicated. Candidate statements have not been edited.

QUESTION: WHAT IS THE SINGLE MOST CRITICAL ISSUE FACING AMHERST THAT MOTIVATED YOU TO RUN?

* INDICATES AN INCUMBENT

ELECTOR

OLIVER SMITH WILL
1 YEAR - VOTE FOR 1

CAROL JEANNETTE GRAY
815 South East St
Graduate student, teacher
Resident: 14 years

Human rights and public engagement are why I am running for this office and why I support keeping Amherst's grassroots-democracy Town Meeting. This position involves giving charitable benefits many more people could apply for if they knew about them: tradesmen, Amherst brides, widows, nurses and others. I hope our community continues to value public engagement, transparency and grassroots participation in all aspects of our town. I'll represent these values in this elected position.

HOUSING AUTHORITY

1 YEAR - VOTE FOR 1

DAVID W. WILLIAMS
158 Rolling Ridge Rd
Retired Educator
Resident: 21 years

I have begun to learn about some of the issues facing the Town of Amherst and desire to continue using my skills, talents and energy to assist others on the Board in providing and managing affordable housing. I will bring over thirty-five years of leadership experience in working with cities, towns, foundations and the Federal Government in analyzing, addressing and solving issues related to citizens on all levels.

TOWN MEETING PRECINCT 2

3 YEARS - VOTE FOR 8

AMBER CANO-MARTIN
318 Grantwood Dr.
Union organizer
Resident: 7 years

I seek to represent a progressive voice. I'm an activist in Amherst Sanctuary, which passed our Sanctuary By-law through Town Meeting last year. I oppose the new charter for Amherst because I believe participatory democracy made possible by Town Meeting allows us to pass this kind of progressive policy locally.

***JOHN COULL**

***BARBARA C FORD**
300 Flat Hills Rd
Volunteer
Resident: 52 years

New school(s): Our decision making process is paralyzed due to polarization in Amherst--not just a TM problem--we need to find a way to accommodate our most important needs yet maintain a reasonable budget and basic maintenance of our infrastructure. Public trust in government needs repair.

VAN KAYNOR
474 Market Hill Rd
Violin, viola and fiddle teacher
Resident: 59 years

I'm running again having served in the 1990s. There currently is a disconnect between the Town's Master Plan and the actions, or lack thereof, of our decision makers. I also hope to make small voices heard, and shed light on issues/concerns that may be overlooked.

STEVEN J LAURIDSEN
1 Tuckerman Ln
Writer, teacher
Resident: 2 years

I am running to participate directly in our prized version of democracy and to bring a couple dimensions of diversity to Town Meeting. With my wife, a naturalized U.S. citizen of less than one year, we live in a bi-cultural household; and we rent our home in the 2nd precinct.

***BETSY MATHEWS**
107 Henry Street
Retired teacher
Resident: 50 years

The spread of student housing, purpose built and single family conversion, is affecting neighborhoods throughout Amherst. The town needs to accurately assess the ongoing rate and extent of this change and identify the effect of this fundamentally different demographic on our schools, services, programs and large capital projects.

WILLIAM M VANNAH
58 HENRY ST
Engineer and prosthetist
Resident: 9 years

Oppose charter. Charter would allow big money to buy eight seats on council, and do whatever they want; e.g., instant zoning changes. The route to lower taxes is not faster government and more apartments. We need detailed, balanced, open plan to encourage small businesses; e.g., local producers and tech startups.

ROSE VON SCHLEGEL
474 Market Hill Rd.
Art teacher
Resident: 24 years

1. Remaining open to considering all sides of issues before making informed decisions. 2. Creating incentives for the arts, renewable energy, affordable housing, smart development in downtown centers, green space in outlying areas, effective public transportation. 3. Wider publicity regarding registration for town committees = greater, more diverse democratic involvement.

1 YEAR - VOTE FOR 1

***PETER VICKERY**
71 Cherry Lane
Attorney
Resident: 19 years

Amherst has been a great place to raise our children, and I would like to help keep it that way. Ensuring that Amherst remains sustainable will require greater fiscal prudence and a

Prepared by the

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF AMHERST

The Election Guide is jointly funded by the Amherst League of Women Voters and the Daily Hampshire Gazette.